



# Clermont County Park District Summer Newsletter

June—August 2011

## *Fascinating Fireflies*

**Keith Robinson, Naturalist**

Generations of children in Ohio have grown up with the same unique backyard ritual as their parents and grandparents: catching fireflies. Also known as lighting bugs, their ability to produce light has captivated the attention of many young children who spend countless summer evenings chasing and capturing these harmless insects.

Belonging to the order coleoptera, fireflies are not truly flies but rather beetles. Over 2,000 species of fireflies have been identified throughout the world on six continents, with over 170 species native to North America. Their name comes from their ability to produce light through a chemical reaction on their abdomen. The purpose of the blinking or flashing pattern seen on summer evenings is reproduction. Males will flash a specific pattern to any interested females who are nearby. If a male flashes within several feet of a female, the female will return a single flash, showing her interest in the male. Males of different species will flash a different pattern to help the females identify males of their own species. Due to their habit of staying close to the ground and rarely flying females are often difficult to find. Additionally they are typically outnumbered by males at a ratio of nearly 50:1. Females have been found to show a preference for males with a faster flash pattern. Females of some species will often mimic the flash pattern of other species. The purpose of this mimicry is not to reproduce, but rather to lure in the male in order to devour him.



*Courtesy: Terry Priest*

After mating occurs, females lay their eggs in damp soil, often near ponds, creeks or streams. Once the eggs hatch, the larvae will spend the next 1-2 years preying on snails, slugs, mites and other invertebrates. Firefly eggs and larvae will also glow, emitting a constant dim light, rather than flashing. Glowing larvae can often be found in grassy areas near forests and are often referred to as glow worms.

During late spring, firefly larvae emerge from underground where they will build a marble sized house out of mud. Here they will pupate for approximately ten days before emerging as adults. Once emerged, they will begin their mating ritual which will last through August, though the peak of their breeding season in our area is typically mid June to mid July.

The flashing of fireflies is a process called bioluminescence. The lighting of the abdomen is a reaction caused by two biologically produced chemicals (luciferin and luciferase) contained within specialized cells called photocytes. During the reaction, oxygen is pushed into the light cells (photocytes) combining with luciferin, luciferase and two other chemicals to produce the light. In the reaction, the light that is produced is called “cold light” because it does not produce any heat during the reaction.

**(Continued on page 3)**

*Rain, rain go away.....*

The rain thus far this year has just been unbelievable! It has made taking care of the parks and getting them ready for the busy summer season an extreme challenge.

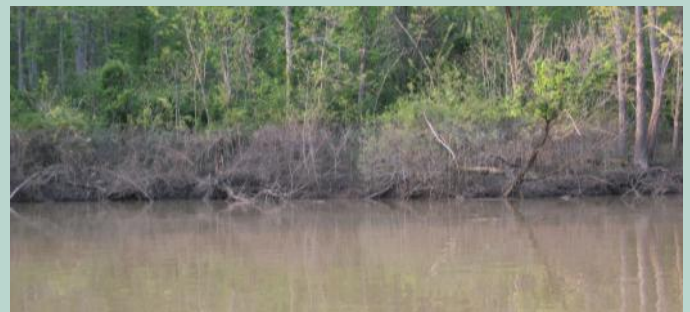
In March, the Ohio River rose to 54 feet at Chilo Lock 34 Park. Backwater flooding of Crooked Run covered the entrance road to the park for a few days. The rising waters deposited lots of driftwood and trees, on the boat ramp, one of which was 70 feet long. Once the waters receded, we were able to get the ramp cleared of trees and debris with help from the Clermont County



Community Service Program. There is an old saying along the river that “the river will come back and get what it has left behind”. Well, it wasn’t long before the river rose again. This time it left the boat ramp clean but gave us a big log jam on the dock pilings. With some help from the Washington Township Fire Department, we hope to have this log jam cleared and the docks in the water soon.



At Crooked Run Nature Preserve, the water was up for so long it left everything coated with a thin layer of mud, giving the area a “bath tub ring”. It will be interesting to see how the plants respond. The high water also brought with it a visit from seven American White Pelicans. Normally found in the western part of the United States, these birds made a quick stop at Crooked Run and were later seen at a couple of lakes in the tri-state region.



All of the rain caused Harsha Lake at East Fork State Park to rise to its highest level ever, more than 40 feet above pool stage. If you happened to visit the Williamsburg to Batavia hike/bike trail you may have been surprised to see that the bike trail’s Cain Run bridge was nearly part of the lake. **(continued on next page)**



*The Cain Run bridge on the Williamsburg to Batavia Hike/Bike Trail was nearly submerged with record levels at Harsha Lake this spring.*



*During normal water levels the bridge sits well above the water.*



### Fascinating Fireflies (continued)

Nearly 100% of the energy produced in this reaction is given off as light energy. In comparison, with a standard incandescent light bulb 90% of the energy is released as heat, and only 10% of the energy is given off as light. Because of the incredible energy efficiency in this reaction many scientists have studied the process of cold light. The study has even lead to the development of new cold light technology such as flashlights that give off very little heat energy.



*Terry Priest*

Fireflies have also played an important part in medical research. The bioluminescent abilities of these beetles have been studied in the research of cancer, cystic fibrosis, multiple sclerosis, and heart disease. The inability of scientists to artificially manufacture the two chemicals (luciferin and luciferase) responsible for the light, make fireflies a valuable source of the naturally produced chemical.

To find out more about these illuminating insects join us at Pattison Park on Friday June 24 as we chase down and catch fireflies. See page 6 for more information.

For more information on fireflies, [click here](#) or [here](#).

### Rain, Rain, Go Away (continued)



The rain has also taken its toll on a number of our hiking trails. The trail at Sycamore Park leading to the Wilson Nature Preserve became virtually impassable due the mud. For several weeks, park staff have been trying to repair and upgrade the trail. Hopefully the rains will stop long enough for staff to finally finish the project.

At Shor Park, we discovered several places where the water likes to flow; unfortunately, many of those places are on the trails! Some temporary repairs will be done, with permanent repairs being completed this summer by the Ohio River Foundation's Youth Conservation Team. This group of high school students will spend three weeks doing conservation projects throughout the Clermont County Park District.

Hope to see you in the parks this summer (minus the raincoats)!

*Excessive amounts of rain this spring has sped up the erosion process on some of the trails at Shor Park.*

**Chris Clingman, Director**



American Heritage Girls held an Art in the Park day camp at the Hartman Log Cabin in April.

AHG troops represented were: OH2004 from Owensville, OH0316 from Mt. Carmel, and OH0998 from Mt. Washington.

If you have pictures of your events held in one of the parks that you'd like to share with us. You can post them to our [flickr group here](#) or post them to our [facebook page here](#).

## Are you following us?

Did you know that the Clermont County Park District has its own [facebook](#) page? Keep up to date on all the latest park programs and events, post your pictures of the parks and get all the information you need to stay informed about the Park District.



You can also view our [flickr](#) page for recent photos, or join our flickr group and post your own pictures of your favorite Clermont County park.



## A Very Special Thank You

To Owensville IGA for donating milk and orange juice for the Pancakes in the Park event on March 12th.

To IHOP in Miami Township for donating pancake batter for the Pancakes in the Park event.

To members of the Grassy Run Historical Arts Committee for volunteering during the Pancakes in the Park.

To Adam Hoople for volunteering at the Pancakes in the Park.

To the East Fork Bass Anglers for sponsoring and organizing the Matt Maupin Memorial Kid's Fishing Tournament at Pattison Park on May 7th.

To Cub Scout Troop 212 for pulling weeds and preparing the garden beds at Chilo Lock #34 Park for planting.

## Matt Maupin Memorial Fishing Tournament

Special Thanks to the East Fork Bass Anglers for coordinating and sponsoring another successful Kid's fishing tournament at Pattison Park on Saturday May 7th.



[To view more pictures of the fishing tournament click here.](#)





## Naturalist



Pre registration  
required

## Programs



Program has a fee

### Clermont County Butterfly Count Shor Park, Pattison Park, Sycamore Park Saturday, June 11 9:00 am



Join the first annual East Fork/  
Clermont County Butterfly Count. All participants  
will begin at the Army Corps of Engineers Visitor  
Center in East Fork State Park. From there, groups  
will visit various locations around the county to  
conduct butterfly counts; each group will be led by a  
veteran butterflyer.

No experience is necessary. Call 513.876.9013 for  
more information or to sign up.

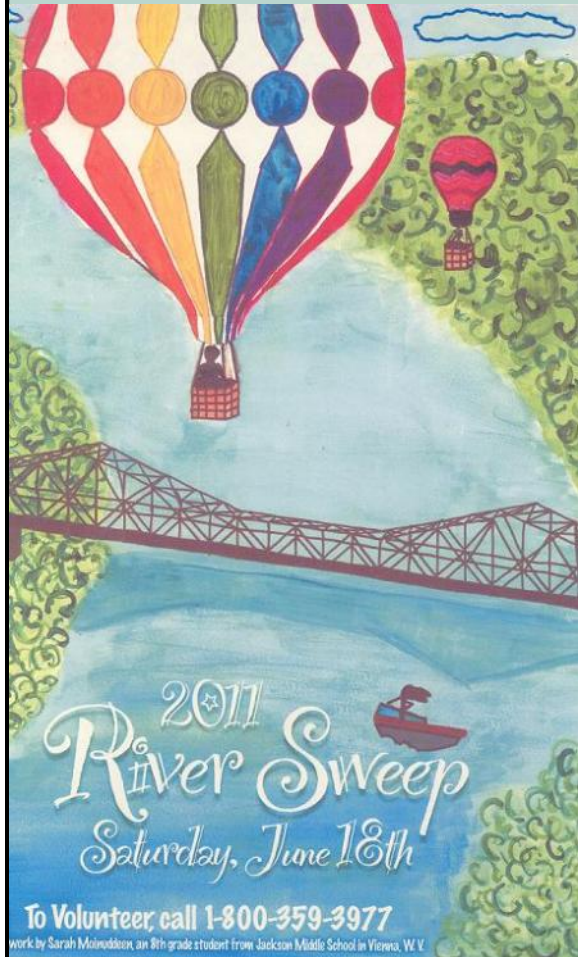
\*There is a \$3.00 participation fee charged by the  
North American Butterfly Association to help defray  
costs associated with coordinating nation-wide  
counts.



### Ohio River Sweep Saturday June 18 Chilo Lock 34 Park 9:00 am—12:00 pm



Join thousands of volunteers in the annual effort to  
clean up the banks of the 981 mile long Ohio  
River. Volunteers will receive a free t-shirt and  
lunch following the clean up. To register at Chilo  
Lock #34 Park please call 513.876.9013. If you  
would like to volunteer at another location in  
Clermont County, please contact Clermont 20/20 at  
753.9222.



Courtesy: ORSANCO



*Butterflyweed*

## Preschool Story Time Sycamore Park

*All preschool storytimes will be held on the second Wednesday of the month at 1:30, unless otherwise noted.*

Bring your preschooler for a special program in the park. Enjoy stories, crafts and hikes with Naturalist Laura and Angie from the Batavia branch library. Each month features a new topic.



**Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> Bugs**  
**Wednesday, July 13<sup>th</sup> Snakes**  
**Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> Stream Splash**

## Illuminating Insects

**Friday June 24**  
**Pattison Park**  
**9:00 pm**

Join the naturalist as we explore the fascinating world of fireflies.

Discover how and why these small beetles flash during early summer evenings. We'll

search the park for these illuminating insects that have captured the curiosity of generations of children.

**Meet at the picnic shelter**, and bring a jar or container to keep the bugs that we catch. All lightning bugs will be released after the program.



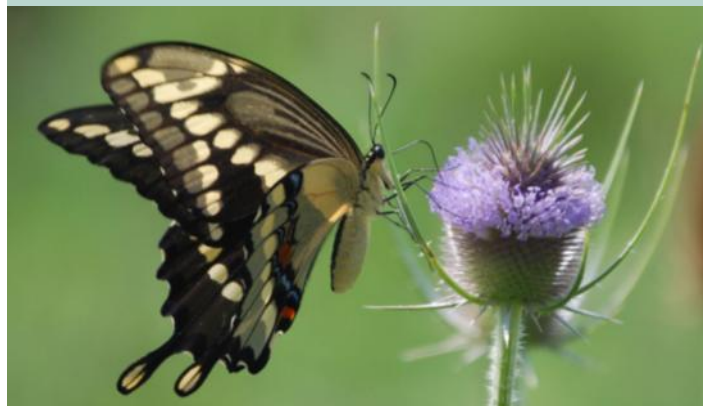
*Courtesy: Terry Priest*

## Long Term Butterfly Monitoring Chilo Lock 34 Park

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## Crooked Run Nature Preserve Weekly in June, July and August

Anyone with an interest in butterflies is welcome to join this citizen scientist project. A weekly walk gathers data on local butterflies; all ages and experience levels are welcome. Contact Laura at [lhoope@co.clermont.oh.us](mailto:lhoope@co.clermont.oh.us) or 513.876.9013 for more information.



**Slimy or Scaly?**  
**Pattison Park**  
**Thursday July 21**  
**6:30 pm**

Join the naturalist to get an up close and personal look at some of our native reptiles and amphibians with a live animal

demonstration. Meet at the picnic shelter.



## Scenic River Hike

**Sunday June 26**

**Little Miami River Scenic Trail Center**

**1:00 pm**

Meet at the Little Miami River Scenic Trail Center for a naturalist guided hike along the state and national scenic Little Miami River. We'll see what flowers are blooming and what birds are singing along the way. The scenic trail center is located in Nisbet Park in downtown Loveland.

The Little Miami River Scenic Trail Center is operated by Little Miami Incorporated.





**Butterfly Walk  
Shor Park  
Saturday July 23  
1:00 pm**

Take advantage of the hot summer days and follow a naturalist through the fields of Shor Park in search of the butterflies that call the park home. Meet by the information kiosk.



**River Critters  
Sycamore Park  
Thursday August 4  
6:30 pm**

Bugs, snails, fish and crawdads! There's a whole world under the water of the East Fork River. Get wet and cool down by searching the river with nets to see which of these critters can be found and what they mean about the health of our waterways. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Closed toe shoes recommended.



**Summer Stroll  
Thursday August 11  
6:30 pm  
Shor Park**

Join the naturalist for a leisurely walk through Shor Park, as you take in the sights and sounds of summer in the newest park within the Clermont County Park District.



*Cardinal Flower*

***A Long Way from Chilo...***

The Clermont County Park District has been participating in project Monarch Watch since 2008. As part of the program, the naturalist staff, along with volunteers, have been collecting monarchs they find in the park, tagging them and releasing them.

Monarchs are unique among butterflies; since each fall they begin a long journey to migrate to their wintering grounds in southern California and Mexico.

For the first time in three years, a butterfly that was tagged at Chilo Lock # 34 Park was recovered 1680 miles away in Mexico. Butterfly "LME970" was tagged at Chilo Lock #34 Park on September 20, 2008 and recovered in El Rosario Monarch Sanctuary, Mexico on March 17, 2011. For more information on the Monarch Watch program visit [www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org). Stay tuned to our fall newsletter for more information on our annual monarch tagging program.



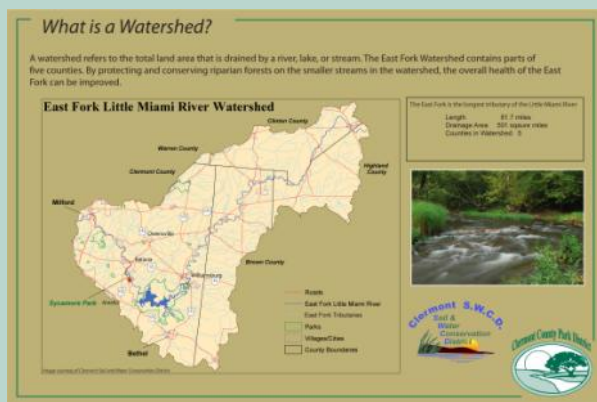
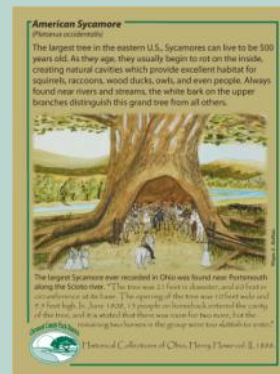
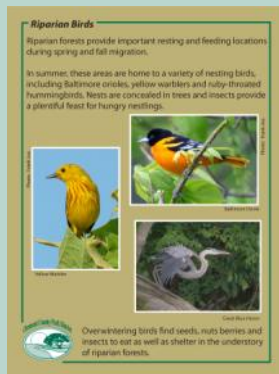
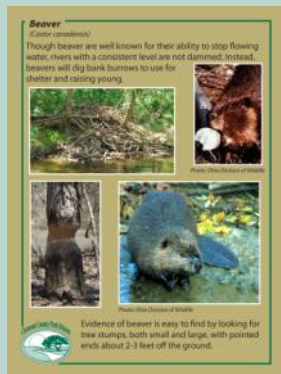
## Wetland Walk Sunday August 21 Chilo Lock 34 Park 1:30 pm

Wetlands are full of life. Join the naturalist as we walk along the waters edge in search of frogs, turtles, dragonflies and all the creatures that make their home in this important habitat. Be prepared to get your feet wet as we use dip nets to see what's living beneath the water. Meet at the visitor center.



## New Trail Signs Added at Sycamore Park

The Park District has recently installed new interpretive signs along the walking path and hiking trails of Sycamore Park and the Wilson Nature Preserve. The signs were purchased with a \$5000 grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's Ohio Environmental Education Fund. Located along the East Fork of the Little Miami River, the signs were put in place to educate visitors about the importance of Riparian Forests (forests located along rivers). If you haven't seen the new signs yet, lace up your boots and head to Sycamore Park for an afternoon of hiking.





## Summer Camps Now Being Offered in the Park District!

Get ready to be wet and dirty - being a naturalist is a messy job! Campers will spend the week exploring the park while developing their skills as budding naturalists. Creeking, hiking, birding and bug catching are just the start of a week filled with helping your child learn to enjoy and appreciate nature. Hands on activities, crafts and games will enhance the topic of the day as Park District naturalists guide campers through the amazing world of nature. Spaces are limited so sign up today! Call 513.876.9013 to sign up.



*June 13-17 9:30 am—2:30 pm Sycamore Park \$65.00 per child*

*June 27-30 9:30 am—2:30 pm Chilo Lock 34 Park \$55.00 per child*

Ages for both camps:  
Children entering grades 2-6

To register call 513.876.9013 or e-mail [krobinson@co.clermont.oh.us](mailto:krobinson@co.clermont.oh.us)





## CHILO *Living and Working with the Ohio River*

*Visit the Chilo Lock 34 Visitor Center and Museum*  
*521 County Park Road Chilo, OH 45112*

**Summer Hours**

**June - August**

**Sunday - Friday 12 pm to 5 pm**

**Saturday 11 am to 5 pm**



### **Park Perks Card**

Local businesses in Clermont County will have an opportunity to promote their services and support the Clermont County Park District on a new Park Perks Card to be distributed throughout the community.

The Park Perks project started as an agreement between Clermont County Park District and Kevin Shellberg from *Sports Image®*. The Clermont County Park District will receive revenue as a result of the advertising sponsorships on the Park Perks Card. *Sports Image®* is responsible for securing the advertising sponsorships

“We continually look for ways to fund improvements to our facilities and look forward to working with *Sports Image®*” said Chris Clingman, Director of Clermont County Park District. “The new Park Perks program will provide our visitors with great savings at local businesses that support our parks”

For anyone interested in becoming an advertising sponsor on the Park Perks Card please contact Kevin Shellberg at 513-560-7565 or [kevin@sportsimageinc.com](mailto:kevin@sportsimageinc.com)



## Attention Scout and Youth Group Leaders!

Did you know the Clermont County Park District offers overnight camping in our Yurts?

We have two yurts available at Chilo Lock 34 Park for Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, American Heritage Girls, church youth camps, or any other organized civic minded youth group. Yurts are \$50 per night and will comfortably sleep 20-25. The yurts come furnished with a wood burning stove.

To rent the yurts for your youth group please call Pattison Park at 513.732.2977.



### Spotlight Species

#### Eastern Box Turtle

*(Terrapene carolina carolina)*

One of our most recognizable reptiles is the Eastern Box Turtle. Technically considered a tortoise because of its terrestrial life style (turtles are aquatic, tortoises live on land) the Eastern Box Turtle is not the most common turtle we have in Ohio, but possibly the one seen most frequently. Since all of Ohio's other turtle species live in the water, our views of the aquatic species are often brief, just before they slide off a log or riverbank into the water.



Eastern Box Turtles have seen a dramatic decline in population over the years. Common threats to their population include habitat loss, encounters with vehicles, and people illegally keeping them as pets. They prefer mature forests to live and will dine on earthworms, snails, insects, mushrooms, berries, flowers, and many other plants and animals.

Late spring and early summer are great times to observe box turtles. In wooded areas of Clermont County, they can be found more easily than in agricultural areas. Because they are unable to regulate their own body temperature, they will seek sunny areas on roadways or parking lots to warm themselves up quicker. Often, this practice turns deadly for the box turtle as their protective shell is no match for an oncoming vehicle.

Because of their population decline, Eastern Box Turtles are listed as a species of special concern in the state of Ohio. If a box turtle makes its way into your yard or garden this summer, they can easily be captured for observation, just remember to release them where you found them, soon after catching them. **Remember, it is illegal to keep any wild animal as a pet in Ohio**, and can lead to further population decline. For great close up views of an Eastern Box Turtle visit the Chilo Lock #34 Visitor Center and Museum this summer, where you can see one on display.

### Picnic Shelter Rentals

The Park District has picnic shelters for rent at Chilo Lock 34 Park, Sycamore Park, and Pattison Park for your summer picnic or family gathering.

Call the Park District administrative office at 513.732.2977 to make your reservation or check on availability.



<b><u>Park/Shelter</u></b>	<b><u>Capacity</u></b>	<b><u>Fee</u></b>
Chilo Lock 34 Park	50	\$75
Pattison Park	150	\$100
Sycamore Woods	50	\$75
Sycamore #2	150	\$100

### Pattison Lodge and Gazebo & Hartman Log Cabin



#### Pattison Lodge and Gazebo Rental Rates

*In Season (May 15— October 15)*

Monday through Thursday \$200

Friday and Sunday \$475

Saturday \$550

*Out of Season (October 16—May 14)*

Monday through Thursday \$200

Friday and Sunday \$425

Saturday \$500



#### Hartman Log Cabin Rental Rates

*In Season Rates (May 15-October 15)*

Monday through Thursday \$100

Friday through Sunday \$150

*\*Includes the use of the picnic shelter*

*Out of Season Rates (October 16—May 14)*

Monday through Sunday

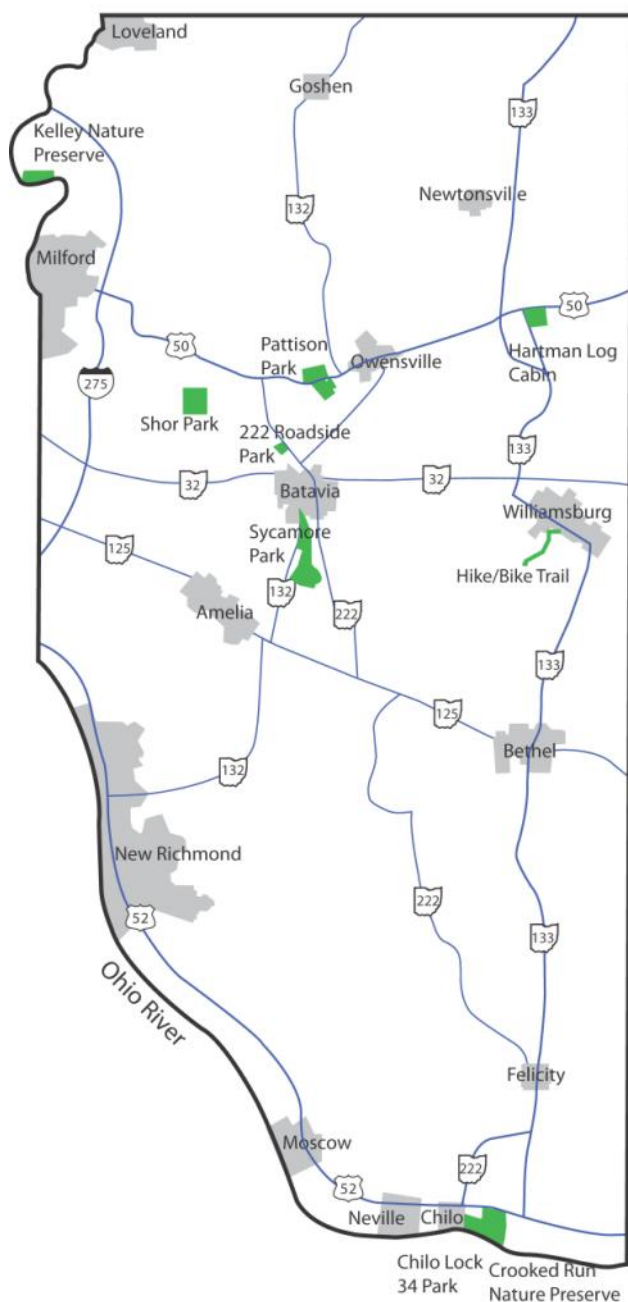
\$100



Blue Vervain



The Clermont County Park District operates six parks, three green spaces, three nature preserves, and three river reserves totaling 520 acres.



#### [Chilo Lock 34 Park](#)

521 County Park Road Chilo, OH 45112  
513.876.9013  
39 acres

#### [Crooked Run Nature Preserve](#)

521 County Park Road Chilo, OH 45112  
77 acres

#### [Hartman Log Cabin](#)

5272 Aber Road Williamsburg, OH 45176  
5 acres

#### [Kelley Nature Preserve](#)

297 Center Street Loveland, OH 45140  
42 acres

#### [Pattison Park](#)

2228 US Highway 50 Batavia, OH 45103  
45 acres

#### [Shor Park](#)

4659 Tealtown Road Batavia, OH 45103  
56 acres

#### [Sycamore Park](#)

4082 State Route 132 Batavia, OH 45103  
53 acres

#### [Wilson Nature Preserve](#)

4082 State Route 132 Batavia, OH 45103  
105 acres

#### [Williamsburg - Batavia Hike/Bike Trail](#)

Broadway Road Williamsburg, OH 45176  
2.5 miles long

#### **Contact Information**

##### *Administrative Office*

2228 US Highway 50 Batavia, OH 45103  
513.732.2977  
parkdistrict@co.clermont.oh.us

##### *Naturalist Office*

PO Box 106 Chilo, OH 45112  
513.876.9013

[www.parks.clermontcountyohio.gov](http://www.parks.clermontcountyohio.gov)

#### **Board of Park Commissioners**

David Anspach Kenneth Stewart  
William Stearns, *Chairman*  
Chris Clingman, *Director*